



Connecticut Chapter
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Martin Mador, Legislative Chair

Government Administration and Elections Committee
March 17, 2014

Testimony In Support of
SB 455 AAC the Citizens' Election Fund
In opposition to Section 20 of
SB 451 AAC Government Administration, State Contracting, Regional School Boards and the
State Elections Enforcement Commission

I am Martin Mador, 130 Highland Ave., Hamden, CT 06518. I hold a Masters of Environmental Management degree from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies.

I am testifying on SB 455 in my capacity as:

- The Legislative Chair of the Sierra Club-Connecticut Chapter
- The Political Chair of the Sierra Club-Connecticut Chapter
- The treasurer of a campaign committee for a candidate for the General Assembly for the 8 elections from 2000 through 2014

To Protect our Environment, we first have to Protect our Democracy

The national Board of the Sierra Club has established the Democracy Initiative Program, which works to ensure we have a strong, vigorous, and appropriate democracy in the country. This has been a strong priority for both the national organization and the state chapter.

Public financing of elections, which began in Connecticut with the 2008 election, is a specular example of how to best run a democracy. As this program serves to protect us from the corrosive and corrupting influence of money on politics and elections, is a bright spot for the state, an example for the country, and one we should hold in highest reverence. About 80% of candidates now participate, an extraordinary testament to the program. The money it takes to support this program is the best possible expenditure of state funds we can imagine.

However, this program (Citizens Election Fund, CEF) cannot succeed unless it is fully funded, and unless that funding is guaranteed, in advance. The program now is at risk, as it depends on accurate advance predictions of necessary funding for every participating candidate.

Passage of SB 455 is necessary to ensure that funds will be available to all qualifying candidates. It is the state's commitment, in advance, that funds will be there for the CEF. It solves, permanently, a nagging, chronic problem which threatens the integrity of the CEF

SB 455 is a necessary bill. It must be passed.

We do not favor section 20 of SB 451 as the mechanism it promotes would not guarantee full funding for the CEF.